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NSC BRIEFING

4 January 1954

SINO-BURMESE RELATIONS AT NEW HEIGHT OF CORDIALITY

I. Peiping apparently successful in coloring views of Burmese Premier Nu.

A. Before his trip to China, Nu had often indicated concern over Chinese Communist intentions towards Burma.

B. Upon return to Rangoon, he publicly extolled the Communist government and interpreted its assurances of noninterference in Burmese affairs as a triumph of Burma's neutral foreign policy.

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C.



D. Nu's reaction contrasts with that of Nehru who returned from a similar trip convinced that China's rulers were both doctrinaire and ruthless.

II. Peiping's prestige and influence in Burma is rising rapidly.

A. Chou's "five principles" which are merely the "coexistence" idea split five ways are becoming household terms.

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- B. Burma's acceptance of Chinese and Orbit area goods in payment for rice and willingness to inaugurate air service as well as restore highway traffic gives the Communists a highly exploitable economic toehold.
- C. Burmese agreement to the establishment of a Chinese Communist consulate general at Lashio--southern terminous of the Burma Road--will give latter a legal outpost in area where they have been actively subverting ethnic minority groups.
- D. Nu's public promise that Burma will do nothing to offend Peiping will make it difficult for the West to help Burma improve its defensive capabilities.

III. Burmese somewhat taken in but expediency dictated their position.

- A. Chinese Communists were evasive on all sensitive political matters brought up by the Burmese.
 - 1. Professed complete ignorance of Burmese Communist leaders.
 - 2. Observed that Chinese maps--which show large chunks of Burma as part of China--were not official but they cannot so state publicly since such a statement might be interpreted as their acceptance of Burmese maps.

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3. Stalled on question of future status of Overseas Chinese.
 - B. The Burmese continue to indicate interest in receiving economic aid from the US.
 - C. U Nu extremely interested in visiting US, although, on advice of the Burmese ambassador here, he has decided not to seek an early invitation.
- IV. Underlying factor governing Burma's relations with Peiping is fear.
- A. Cabinet officer recently stated that since Geneva Burma had lost hope of Western support for a strong stand against Peiping and therefore had to "play safe."
- V. In any event, Communist China gained an effective champion for its participation in the forthcoming Afro-Asian conference in Indonesia.
- A. Chou told Nu of China's desire to attend.
 - B. Immediately afterwards, Nehru--undoubtedly informed--changed his attitude of indifference to one of warm support for such a conference.
 - C. At recent Colombo power conference last week, Nu was most outspoken advocate of invitation to Peiping--even to point of refusing to attend if it were not extended.

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- VI. Seems apparent that India, Burma, and Indonesia, in addition to their announced aims, see conference as a dramatic device to get Peiping into wider international setting.
- A. Peiping has hailed Bogor decisions as "major step to strengthen peace."
 - B. As yet, anti-Communist invitees have for most part taken noncommittal attitude re attendance.
- VII. After slow start, idea of Afro-Asian get together finally got a full blow up.
- A. Indonesians thought up the idea nearly a year ago as something "new" to bolster their prestige.
 - B. Colombo powers cool to idea at meeting last April, but accepted concept and left follow-up to Indonesia.
 - C. Feelers by Indonesia brought generally indifferent reactions from Arab and African states.
- VIII. But at Colombo powers' meeting last week, with knowledge Chinese Communists wanted invitation, things proceeded with dispatch; conference set for last week in April at Bandung.
- A. Stated purposes:
 - 1. To demonstrate desire African and Asia nations to work for common aims and increase mutual understanding.

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2. To discuss social, economic, and cultural problems and such problems of special interest as racial and colonial issues.
 3. To discuss ways Afro-Asian nations can contribute to maintenance of world peace.
- B. Conference would include--
1. From Africa: Central African Federation, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gold Coast, Libya, Liberia, Sudan
 2. From Middle East-South Asia: Afghanistan, Ceylon, India, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Nepal, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, Yemen
 3. From Far East: Burma, Cambodia, Communist China, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Philippines, Thailand, North Vietnam, South Vietnam.
- C. Some talk before conference of inviting Australia and New Zealand but no action taken.
- D. Japan, not yet technically at peace with certain invitees including Indonesia, invited to counter reaction to invitation of Peiping.
- E. After meeting, Colombo delegates explained:
1. USSR left out because politically it is a part of Europe.
 2. South Africa out because of racial views.
 3. Nigeria considered but no one at conference knew its status.

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4. Israel qualified for invitation but excluded because of Arab attitude.
5. Korea in "fluid state"; (Nehru noted that Indochina was also but Colombo powers have "special responsibility" there)
6. No one at conference raised question of inviting Formosa.